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RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
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SIPDIS

EEB/TPP/MTA FOR CRAFT
WHITEHOUSE FOR USTR; ATTN: KIRK, SHARK
FAS FOR ITP, MTND
USDOC FOR ITA
DEPT OF TREASURY FOR YUAN

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SUBJECT: DOHA DEMARCHE: GHANA PREFERS MULTILATERAL DISCUSSIONS

REF: STATE 123787

11. SUMMARY. Econoffs met with GOG trade officials to discuss the recent WTO Ministerial Conference (Reftel). Director of Multilateral, Regional and Bilateral Trade Clement Nyaaba appreciated Post initiating the conversation and agreed that the impasse at the conference was "disturbing." He expressed his desire to see multilateral talks happen between now and the 2011 Ministerial Conference, as opposed to bilateral talks, to make the conference more effective. Remarking on the Doha Development Round meeting, Nyaaba asked which agricultural text should be used as a basis for talks, adding that the latest text introduced was not necessarily the best one. Post also transmitted USTR's request for a TIFA meeting during the week of April 11, and Nyaaba said he would discuss the date with Minister Tetteh. END SUMMARY.

12. Econoffsmet the Director of Multilateral, Regional and Bilateral Trade in the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Clement Nyaaba. He affirmed the positive role of the WTO, particularly the Aid for Trade program. In future negotiations, he wishes to see increased market access for Ghanaian goods and a greater commitment from the United States, though he did not offer any specifics on these issues. In response to the USG request for help in getting a Doha agreement with the G-77, he noted that countries like Ghana do not have adequate leverage over rapidly growing economies like India and China. Nyaaba appreciated Post initiating the conversation and agreed that the impasse at the conference was "disturbing." He favored WTO members holding multilateral discussions in advance of the next Ministerial Conference in order to identify a common starting point for negotiations. Nyaaba preferred a multilateral forum to the bilateral meetings that are currently taking place because they offer greater transparency. He remarked that he was anxious of bilateral solutions being imposed upon Ghana without GOG input.

13. Nyaaba said the Doha Development Round (DDR) needed "new life." Remarking on the roadmap meeting, he asked where countries were supposed to restart from, and which agriculture text they should use, with a caveat that the latest text introduced was not necessarily the best one.

14. Post and the GOG have been trying to arrange a date for Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) discussions. Post transmitted USTR's proposal for the week of April 11. Nyaaba was optimistic that the dates would be acceptable, but said that he would need to confirm them with the Minister Tetteh. Post suggested an advance meeting to review the agenda and prepare for a more meaningful discussion. Nyaaba agreed and expressed interest in maintaining dialogue. He also said that he has convened a TIFA National Implementation Committee consisting of GOG economic agencies and relevant members of Parliament.

¶5. Post raised the issue of trade barriers in West Africa and between Nigeria and Ghana as a concern of U.S. firms operating in Ghanaian free zones. Nyaaba agreed that trade barriers were a problem, and said the GOG is actively working within ECOWAS and in their bilateral relationship with Nigeria to enhance trade opportunities, and that President Mills himself has engaged with Nigeria on the subject. He mentioned an ECOWAS investment protocol that "no one wants to implement." In spite of the many difficulties they have encountered, he said the GOG now "has a road map" to a resolution. He also agreed with Econoffs that GOG Free Zone rules of origin "don't make sense." (COMMENT: Washington may want to consider adding this to the TIFA agenda if there is agency interest in reviewing GOG rules of origin for Free Zone companies. END COMMENT.)

¶6. COMMENT: Although still an office director, Nyaaba has recently returned from years serving as the WTO officer in the Ghanaian mission to Geneva. Ghana still has a shallow bench when it comes to trade policy, and Nyaaba is a key player in the formulation of GOG trade policy. END COMMENT.

TEITELBAUM